

August 4, 1967

Maurice B. Visscher
University of Minnesota
Medical School
Department of Physiology
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55455

Dear Dr. Fisher:

I am very grateful for the kind of attentive criticism you have given the writings I have sent you. I could certainly benefit from more of this even when I do not appear to assimilate contrary views into my own thinking. I will certainly be keeping in mind what you had to say in my own further writing.

Probably our most acute point of difference had to do with the priorities for artificial heart research. I hope I made it clear that I would not prefer artificial heart development to a wide range of basic research. I did think that it ought to be taken very seriously in competition with such ventures as the SST. I view the most essential competition as being, not the money, but for man power and for industrial resources and the artificial heart would not be in the same arena as basic research with respect to these. However, permit me to put that aside and ask whether you would be willing to do me a favor which I will ask of you quite bluntly. My weekly writing for the Washington Post represents, as you may imagine, a considerable effort on my part and I am naturally anxious to get as wide public coverage as possible for this kind of commentary. The Post is quite willing to syndicate the column but it does not do an aggressive job of selling it and quite obviously it would be likely to appeal to only a fraction of the readers of any particular paper and probably to some selective papers at that. From my own experience, the only way I have been able to secure wider distribution of the column has been through the good offices of some of my friends and colleagues in communicating to newspaper editors in their own communities. I realize this is putting something of an imposition upon you and please do not hesitate to ignore my request. If, however, you can see some general merit in having my column appear

Visscher

M. Visscher

- 2 -

August 4, 1967

regularly in the Minneapolis Star or any other newspaper in your city, I would be very much obliged for any effort you might care to undertake on its behalf.

I believe that the effort of writing the column is worth while for the impact it can have on a thoughtful and influential segment of the community. While Washington is perhaps one of the most important communities for the purpose, it is of course essential to all of us that the importance of science be recognized on the broadest possible base, too.

I am enclosing a set of the pieces that have appeared to date. If any of your editor friends have an interest in the matter, they can communicate either directly with me or perhaps more appropriately with Mr. Howard Simons, The Washington Post, 1515 L Street, N.W., Washington D.C. 20005.

The column is not part of the regular Washington Post wire service and is, therefore, therefore, neither regularly available to its subscribers nor is it restricted to that group of papers.

It may perhaps relieve both of us of some embarrassment if I ask you not to reply and I will simply leave it to the event to discover whether the Star will have been moved to take ~~some~~ positive steps.

Yours sincerely,



Joshua Lederberg
Professor of Genetics

JL/gem